After 5 days return to
Mrs. T. E. Dean
1507 S.E. 7th Ave
CAMAS, WASHINGTON

CAMAS PAPER WRAPS THE WORLD

CAMAS Paper FESTIVAL
Camas, Wash.

JULY 24 - 25 -26; 1941

E LODGE.
29
1941
OREG.

DISPATCHED FROM OSWEGO
8:30 A.M. JUNE 29, '41
IN PONY EXPRESS MAIL BAG

Miss Ann Dean
1507 S E 7th Ave
Camas, Wash

THIS COVER CARRIED BY COWBOY
RELAY TEAM VIA OLD OREGON TRAIL

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
SECURITY EDUCATION
CONSERVATION HEALTH
FOR DEFENSE
POSTAGE 2 CENTS

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RELAY TEAM VIA OLD OREGON TRAIL

1941 Camas Paper Festival Pony Express Souvenir Cover
Timberline Lodge–Oswego Dispatch
Sent to two-and-a-half-year-old Ann Dear of Camas, Washington

Reflections

Jeffrey Hunt
September 10 2025

I had this random idea yesterday about a great project, and it came from thinking back to a notebook I once kept in high school — some kind of social studies class– That thought set me off on a search. I headed upstairs to the family room, where the mountain of bankers boxes now lives. Over the past year or so, I've been consolidating, labeling, and stacking them, part of my slow effort to get everything organized and in one place. It's the sort of project that never really ends, and every time I think I know what's in those boxes, something new surfaces.

Scanning the labels: *old school papers* popped out. That seemed like a good candidate for the missing notebook. I unburied it, opened it up, and there it was — one of the dreaded steel boxes. Every steel box signals "serious archiving," full of old things that demand time and attention. (In reality is just an older thin wall steel box, with a tiny handle, commonly used to store papers.) There are only a couple – two or three, but each one carries weight.

Inside the bankers box, along with the steel box, was a mix of other material, including an old stamp album. The album still holds stamps — some of the earliest dating back to the 1860s — and tucked loosely in the first pages were stray papers: one, a mid-1800s document bearing my great-great-grandfather's signature as a witness in a land sale, addressed to Oregon's fifth governor Chadwick (his brother-in-law); another, just the final page of a New Year's letter from my grandmother Blanche's aunt Dolly Smith, wishing well to some long-forgotten recipient. Dolly died in 1929.

And then, out slipped this envelope. Inside was only a folded half-sheet of blank paper. No letter, no message. Just the envelope itself, saved for reasons of its own. What is interesting is it is addressed to my Aunt Ann. The postmark is 1941 — she was born in early 1939, so she would have been just two and a half years old when this was mailed. Somehow, the envelope made its way into the stamp album, probably slipped in by my grandmother Dear, and there it stayed until now.

The envelope is more than just a family address, though. It's a souvenir from a Pony Express relay reenactment, dispatched out of Oswego, Oregon, carried by horseback "via the old Oregon Trail," with a bold Timberline Lodge illustration on the back. The front is stamped with the 1941 Camas Paper Festival logo — *"Camas Paper Wraps the World"* — a perfect reflection of the town's mill identity. It carries a "For Defense" 3¢ stamp, a reminder of its moment in time just months before Pearl Harbor.

So there you have it. A completely random search for a high school notebook turned into one small but remarkable artifact: a 1941 Pony Express festival cover, addressed to a toddler and tucked away among stamps, a steel box, all inside a bankers box, upstairs in the family room. This is what the archive feels like — every scrap of paper, every slip of an envelope, every forgotten corner of a box leading down another path. It never seems to end.

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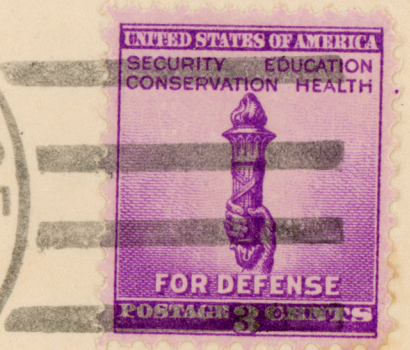

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